

Ramallah waits in wings as Palestinian business capital

RAMALLAH (AFP) — As the intifada graffiti fades off the walls and its 40,000 residents look to self-rule, the bustling town of Ramallah on Jerusalem's doorstep is turning into the Palestinian business capital.

Ramallah is a mere 10-minute drive from Jerusalem, set amid rocky, alive-tree dotted hills at the centre of a future Palestinian entity which the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) insists will one day become a state.

The town is bracing itself for an economic boom and seeks to lure investors with stability. Unlike the flash-point town of Hebron, it is free of holy sites that can attract tourists but can also become the focus of religious conflict.

"We want to restore our city as the pride of Palestine," said Khalil Mussa Khalil, the town's mayor.

While encouraging the trend to turn Ramallah into a business capital, he cautions against forecasts that the town could take the place of Jerusalem, although several self-rule ministries are already in place.

"We don't approve of talk of Ramallah as the next capital, our only capital is Jerusalem," he insisted.

On the eve of self-rule,

mobile phones, satellite dishes, BMW cars and mountain bikes are already common sights in Ramallah, a town long noted as a haven for the political elite and intellectuals.

With Bir Zeit University nearby, the town has Muslim and Christian communities, while Jewish settlements stand on neighbouring hillsides. Al Bireh is its twin town.

Under the West Bank self-rule accord, which the Israeli parliament endorsed on Friday, the army is to withdraw from all Palestinian towns barring Hebron by the end of the year. Patrols in Ramallah have already been eased.

Hundreds of new firms are planning to set up here, while small to medium-sized businesses, such as pharmaceutical companies, are already flourishing.

Major investors, however, are waiting to see what self-rule brings, although a construction boom is already underway, along with work on new roads and a sewage system.

New building this year covered 112,000 square metres up until June, compared to 78,000 square metres for the whole of 1993, the year before self-rule was launched in Gaza and Jericho, the

mayor's office said.

Abdullah Belouni, manager of the Arab Bank branch in Manara Square that reopened in December for the first time since 1967, said almost all loans were going out to construction.

Land prices have rocketed. In the centre of town, a donum of prime real estate can now sell for as much as a million dollars.

Abu Afif, a 57-year-old developer, returned from Brazil in 1994 and has demolished an old building off the square to build a 10-storey block, including a billiards hall and a branch of the U.S. children's restaurant chain KFC.

The town has close links with the United States, where hundreds of families have emigrated since the end of the last century.

Red-tiled villas have sprouted up on the outskirts of Ramallah, a district of 300,000 inhabitants, although prices have tripled, according to Salahadin Jarr Alodeh of the newly-rehoused chamber of commerce.

Mr. Alodeh said the town is already the centre of Palestinian banking, with 12 new branches opening soon. But the gold rush since the end of the intifada, or Palestinian uprising, also has its down side.



TOURING THE STREETS: His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, on Sunday chats with citizens during a tour of Amman (see page 3) (photo by Boghos)

UAE steps up its campaign against drugs and alcohol

ABU DHABI (AFP) — The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has stepped up a campaign to combat drugs and alcohol amid growing abuse in the country and a surge in narcotics-trafficking from Pakistan and other Asian countries.

A few months after it decided to enforce the death penalty against drug smugglers, the government last week created a Higher Committee for Combating Drugs and Intoxicants to spearhead the drive.

Officials said around five million dirhams (\$1.36 million) had already been earmarked for the committee as an initial budget.

"The committee will map out strategies, policies and programmes to fight narcotics and intoxicants throughout the country," Interior Minister Mohammed Said Al Badi told the official news agency WAM.

"The creation of the committee illustrated our leaders' keenness to take more effective measures to tackle this problem and protect our youth. It also underscores the need for a comprehensive and radical action," he said.

The committee is headed by Sheikh Sultan Ben Zayed Al Nahayan, the deputy prime minister, and composed of senior representatives from the Interior Ministry, intelligence, the central bank, and the ministries of foreign affairs, education,

health, information, Islamic affairs and other departments.

Officials said the campaign would include television programmes, seminars, leaflets and sermons against drug abuse during open-air Friday prayers.

The Health Ministry will also expand existing programmes to treat drug addicts, who are pardoned if they turn themselves in.

Mr. Badi, a former army chief, said the committee would boost cooperation with other Gulf states and countries outside the region to fight drugs.

"We will dedicate Friday sermons to highlight the hazards of narcotics and intoxicants and urge our youth to stay away from such harmful things," Sheikh Mohammed Al Khazraji, minister of Islamic affairs and endowments, said.

Dubai police commander Dahi Khalaf said there was a need to bolster the country's coast and border guard and tighten control of small harbours.

Police records showed most of the smuggled drugs over the past decade came by sea from neighbouring Iran, Pakistan and other Asian countries.

More than eight tonnes seized in the past three years, involving hashish, heroin, cocaine, opium and other drugs. The bulk of those arrested in this connection

were Pakistanis, Iranians and Africans.

Apart from the surge in trafficking operations, officials have been alarmed by what they call the spread of drug addiction among their own people. Several UAE men were reported to have died from overdoses in the past few years.

"This problem has become very serious. We feel it is time to act before it gets out of control," a senior police officer told AFP.

"Enforcement of the death penalty could deter international gangs. We have to take action at the same time to safeguard our youth from indulging in such crimes," he said.

Despite the introduction of capital punishment early this year, police have reported several narcotic smuggling attempts, although they involved relatively small quantities seized mostly at sea.

Experts believe the UAE, a major oil producer, remains one of the most vulnerable to narcotic trafficking in the region because of its proximity to drug-producing states in Asia, the presence of large foreign communities and its long coastline.

An Iranian crackdown on drug trafficking is also to blame, they said, as smugglers were forced to switch routes through the emirates and other countries to reach their destinations in Europe.

Libyans paid \$50,000 to Egyptian opposition leader - Rose Al Youssef

CAIRO (AP) — Libya paid \$50,000 to an Egyptian opposition party — in violation of Egyptian law — to obtain political favours, Egypt's most prominent magazine said Sunday.

The weekly Rose Al Youssef published a copy of a letter from a top Libyan official authorising the payment in 1991 to Mustafa Kamel Murad, leader of the small, opposition Liberal Party.

The magazine, which is government-owned but with a reputation for aggressive, investigative reporting, said the \$50,000 payment was part of Colonel Muammar Qaddafi's programme to fund Egyptian opposition parties in return for their support of Libya.

Mr. Murad declined to comment on the charges Sunday. It was not clear why the weekly chose to publish the letter now, but it comes a month before parliamentary elections that President Hosni Mubarak's party has sought to make free and fair.

The Liberal Party is a small group with little influence during the 1991 Gulf war when it supported Iraq. Several opposition parties have set up in Egypt in recent years, but none pose a challenge to Mubarak's ruling party.

Libya, flush with substantial oil revenues, has often funded movements abroad as a way to increase its influence. Such payments have long been rumoured in neighbouring Egypt, despite a ban on political parties receiving any financing from foreign countries.

The magazine said other Egyptian opposition parties were financed by Libya, too, but declined to name them.

In his daily column Sunday in the party's daily Al Ahrar newspaper, Mr. Murad described Col. Qaddafi as "the only Arab leader who stands with his head high at a time of Arab surrender."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Egypt and U.S. to hold war games

CAIRO (R) — The annual joint exercises between the Egyptian and U.S. armed forces, known as Bright Star, will take place in November, Egyptian Chief of Staff Salah Halabi said in an interview published on Sunday. This year France, Britain and the United Arab Emirates will also take part, he told the government newspaper Akhbar in an interview marking the Arab-Israeli war of 1975. The exercises were first held after Egypt and Israel signed a peace treaty in 1979 as a sign of better relations and Egypt's shift away from dependence on the Soviet Union for weapons and training. They have taken place almost every year since. Lieutenant-General Halabi did not say how many troops would take part in the exercises or how long they would last.

Rock of emerald to be sold at auction

DUBAI (AFP) — An 80-kilogramme rock glittering with raw emerald is to be sold at auction in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), officials said Sunday. The auction at the Sharjah Expo Centre has been delayed until a later date to allow buyers from abroad to attend after not enough people turned up for Saturday's event, an official for the centre, Adnan Abu Hijab, said. The auction started at \$50 million but was cancelled after only 12 of the 31 people who had registered turned up, he said. "Many people called from abroad showing interest, but did not have the time to come to the United Arab Emirates," he said. "So the auction was delayed to a date that will be announced later." The rock belongs to a Mauritanian, Mr. Abu Hijab said.

Women-chasers face one year in jail

DUBAI (AFP) — Cruising in cars for women, with the usual cat-calls and whistles, has become a crime in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). "The harassment of girls in public places has become a serious problem in some parts of the country," the Khaleej Times newspaper said, quoting officials. "The government has ordered vice squads to apply severe penalties on the stalkers." First-time offenders will get a one-month prison term, and if the violation is repeated, penalties include one year in jail and a fine of 60,000 dirhams (\$16,000), the officials said. The instrument of the crime — the car — will be impounded and expatriate women-chasers will be deported after serving their jail sentence. Many women have complained about being chased by young men in fast cars, the officials said, adding that another teasing technique was to drive slowly near the sidewalk and follow the women as they walk. And beware of acts performed inside the vehicle, officials said, warning that "those who use their cars for immoral purposes will be jailed for six months."

Kuwait jails man for killing 'witch'

KUWAIT (R) — A Kuwait court upheld a 10-year jail term against a man who killed a sister-in-law he suspected had made his wife ill by witchcraft, a newspaper said on Sunday. The man fired six bullets into the woman's head and then "rushed back to the hospital to see if the spell had left his wife, only to find that she had died," Al Qabas daily reported. The appeal court rejected defence arguments the defendant acted in line with an Islamic rule allowing killing of witches, Islam, which bans witchcraft, says a judge can order the execution of witches after a trial. Al Qabas said the man found items used by witches in the victim's house.

Oman buys Swiss anti-aircraft guns

DUBAI (R) — Oman has bought Swiss 35-millimetre anti-aircraft guns made by a unit of Oerlikon, diplomatic sources said on Sunday. The sources said the contract, which was also sought by Britain's GEC-Marconi, was signed on Oct. 3. No details of the size or value of the deal were immediately available. The official Omani News Agency on Sunday quoted Jund (soldier) Oman magazine as saying the weapons would be deployed in November when the country celebrates its 25th national day. Oman's military modernisation programme is not as extensive as those in neighbouring Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Kuwait and Iran across the Gulf waterway. Two French fast patrol warships last month joined the Omani navy, while delivery of 18 British Challenger Two tanks began this year.

Talibans say they will allow women education

ISLAMABAD (R) — A senior U.N. official said on Saturday that Afghanistan's Taliban Islamic movement had assured him it would allow women to be educated in areas it controls. Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs Peter Hansen told reporters in Islamabad that the assurance was given to him on Friday when he visited the southern Afghan town of Kandahar, the headquarters of the Taliban. Earlier press reports from the area said the Taliban had banned girls from schools in the western town of Herat after it captured the area from pro-government forces last month. Mr. Hansen said his talks with the Taliban's Shura (council) included the question of ensuring that girls would be given an opportunity of education.

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PROGRAMME TWO
14:00 Shelley Duvall's Bodine Stories
14:30 Hey Day
15:00 Survival
16:00 I Love Lucy
17:00 Children's programme — Les Mondes Englouts
17:30 Serie — Les Aventures Ou Rio Verde
19:00 News in French
19:15 Magazine — Minibus
19:30 News Headlines
20:00 Camp Wildest
20:30 The Bold and the Beautiful
21:10 Haris of the West
22:00 News in English
22:30 Inspector Morse
23:30 American Chart Show
23:59 Stamp of Circuits

PRAYER TIMES
06:15 Fajr
06:30 (Sunrise) Duha
11:23 Dhuhur
14:42 'Asr
17:16 Maghrib
18:33 'Isha

CHURCHES
St. Mary of Nazareth Church

Swellish, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 63785.
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624990.
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440.
De la Salle Church Tel. 622566.
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541.
Anglican Church Tel. 652826.
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 775261.
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261.
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751.
Armenian International Church Tel. 652526.
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 634328.
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 684195.
The Latter-day Saints Tel. 654932.
Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691.
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295.

WEATHER
Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.
Moderate weather conditions will prevail with temperatures around average and winds north-westerly moderate. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate to active and seas calm.
Mia/Max. temp. Amman 14/27

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

EMERGENCIES
Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Rescue 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 617101
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Department 63021
Hotel Complaints 605800
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage 897467
Complaints 787111
Telephone Information (discreet assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone 623101
Repairs 623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 774111
Radio Jordan 680100
Water Authority 815615
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615

REPAIRS
Dr. Mohammad Al Oadi 248743
Alquds pharmacy (—)

ZARQA
Dr. Youssef Abu Sa'd 989000
Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

HOSPITALS
Medical Centre 813813/32

FOR THE TRAVELLER
QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

Khalidi Maternity, J. Amn. 644281/6
Akileh Maternity, J. Amn. 64241/2
Jabal Amman Maternity 642562
Mallat, J. Amman 656140
Palestine, Shmoutani 664171/4
Shmoutani Hospital 669131
University Hospital 845845
Al-Musharraf Hospital 667227/9
The Islamic, Abdali 664176/3
Al-Ahli, Abdali 664164/6
Italian, Al-Muhajroon 777101/3
Al-Basheh, J. Ashrafieh 775111/2
Army, Marka 891011/15
Queen Alia Hospital 66240/50
Amal Hospital 674155
The Arab Center for Heart and Special Surgery 865199
ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)83323
Zarqa National Hospital (09)900560
Ibn Sina Hospital (09)986732
Al-Hikma Modern Hospital (09)909090
Irbid
Princess Batina Hospital (02)275555
Greek Catholic Hospital (02)27275
Ibn Al-Nafies Hospital (02)247100
AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital (03)314111

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ARRIVALS
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)
07:28 Senas (RJ)
08:08 Damascus (RJ)
08:30 Jeddah (RJ)
09:00 New Delhi (RJ)
09:18 Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
09:30 Aqaba (RJ)
09:30 Beirut (RJ)
16:15 Cairo (RJ)
18:10 Casablanca, Tunis (RJ)
22:40 Bangkok, Jakarta (RJ)
23:45 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)
06:45 Khartoum (SD)
12:40 Muscat, Abu Dhabi (GF)
13:30 Kiev (U)
18:45 Paris, Damascus (AF)
19:30 Cairo (MS)
21:30 London (BA)
01:25 Amsterdam (KL)

DEPARTURES
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)
05:40 Beirut (RJ)
07:00 Aqaba (RJ)
11:30 Amsterdam, Chicago (RJ)
12:10 Cairo (RJ)
12:30 Frankfurt (RJ)
20:45 Damascus (RJ)
21:15 Bahrain, Doha (RJ)
21:30 Dubai, Muscat (RJ)
23:59 Abu Dhabi (RJ)
23:59 Damascus (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)
05:35 London (KJ)
06:00 Istanbul (TK)
07:30 Rome (RZ)
07:45 Beirut (ME)
13:30 Bahrain, Abu Dhabi, Muscat (GF)
14:30 Kiev (U)
20:25 Cairo (MS)
22:30 Damascus, London (BA)
02:30 Amsterdam (KL)

MARKET PRICES
Upper/lower price in lib per kg.
Apple 700/500
Banana (Mukammur) 680
Cabbage 620
Carrot 300/130
Cauliflower 330/230
Cucumbers (large) 200/100
Cucumbers (small) 300/200
Eggplant 250/160
Garlic 190/140
Grapes 680/520
Guava 600/500
Lemon 240/200
Marrow (large) 220/120
Marrow (small) 340/230
Mulukhia 900/750
Okra (green) 380/280
Onion (dry) 250/180
Pepper (hot) 230/150
Pepper (sweet) 350/250
Pomegranate 300/200
Potato 820/620
Spinach 110/70
String Beans 820/620
Tomato 110/70

Conservative MP defects to Labour in body blow to Major

LONDON (R) — A senior Conservative member of parliament has defected to the opposition Labour Party, dealing a body blow to Prime Minister John Major on the eve of his party's annual conference.

Alan Howarth's shock move — he is the first Conservative ever to "cross the floor" of parliament to join Labour — reduced Mr. Major's already fragile majority in parliament to five.

Attacking the party that has been in office since 1979 but is now deeply unpopular with voters, the former minister said: "There is an arrogance of power and a harshness within the government which is damaging to our democracy."

"There is a kind of listlessness, a lack of vision," the former minister told BBC Television Sunday.

Conservative Party Chairman Brian

Mawhinney, fighting to contain the political damage from Mr. Howarth's resignation, said the decision was bizarre, eccentric and sad.

Mr. Major, who in June fought off a right-wing challenge to his leadership after months of sniping, hoped to use this week's Conservative conference to stage a political fighthead in the run-up to the next election, due by mid-1997.

But Mr. Howarth's defection has given valuable ammunition to Labour, already in buoyant mood after its own annual conference resoundingly backed centrist leader Tony Blair. Mr. Howarth, who had a safe seat in William Shakespeare's birthplace town of Stratford-upon-Avon, switched sides after secret talks with the modernist Blair, whose own party has abandoned much of its socialist dogma.

Deputy Labour leader

John Prescott, welcoming Mr. Howarth into the party, said: "This is a further blow to John Major and his divided and despised party."

Conservatives were stunned after Mr. Howarth announced his resignation Sunday night. The timing could not have been worse, severely bruising morale on the eve of the party conference in the holiday resort of Blackpool.

The Conservatives already trail Labour by more than 20 percentage points in opinion polls.

Voters are angered by policy U-turns, party in-fighting over Britain's role in the European Union, allegations of sleaze and a string of sexual and financial scandals.

Conservative grandee Lord Howe, whose bitter attack on Mr. Major's predecessor Margaret Thatcher led to her downfall, even hinted that time had finally run out for the

Conservatives.

"We live in a democracy. Even the Conservatives don't have the secret of eternal life. Power must change from time to time," he warned last week.

Conservatives hoping to attack Mr. Blair for making spendthrift promises in his conference speech were given little ammunition.

Everything Mr. Blair promised — smaller class sizes, cable links for schools — would either be funded by cuts elsewhere or provided free by grateful companies who have been cosy up to Labour as it looks increasingly like a government in waiting.

Hailing the speech as an election turning point, the Economist magazine concluded: "His speech and this conference could be seen in retrospect as the decisive moment. Even the Tories, who never yield easily, may be forgiven a shiver."



Franciscan friars of the Immaculate Church from New Bradford, Massachusetts, pray with Pope John Paul II during a mass in New York (AFP photo)

Pope prays as AIDS activists protest

NEW YORK (R) — Pope John Paul II enjoyed a pop-star's reception from 125,000 New Yorkers Saturday and filled a city cathedral with adoring faithful but gays and feminists staged the first serious protests of his U.S. tour.

Devout Roman Catholics prayed with their spiritual leader in St. Patrick's Cathedral, many of them weeping with joy and claiming a special religious experience.

But more than 200 gay and lesbian demonstrators, kept at a distance outside by riot police, shouted "stop AIDS, stop the homophobia, stop the Pope."

Police ripped down a three-storey high banner declaring "condoms save lives" that AIDS activists unfurled from the roof of the Saks Department Store opposite St. Patrick's.

Six demonstrators were arrested over the banner and four others during a separate protest march.

In the march, actress

Olympia Dukakis and feminist leader Gloria Steinem led several hundred women demanding the church end its bans against abortion and women priests.

"We are not here against the Pope. The Pope is against us," Ms. Steinem said. "We're to encourage women not to lose hope just because the Pope is in town and there's such a production about it," said Dukakis.

But the adulation for out-weighed the protests, despite the unpopularity of the Pope's conservative policies here.

Many famous Americans took the chance to be at the Pope's side. Rightwing televangelist Pat Robertson was a surprise guest at the Pope's huge mass for 125,000 people in Central Park, sitting on a podium of religious leaders at the side of the altar.

Mr. Robertson later attended a meeting between the Pope and more than 30 Christian and Muslim lead-

ers. Veteran comedian Bob Hope, and New York's top political leaders including Mayor Rudolph Giuliani were in St. Patrick's where the Pope recited the rosary.

The Pope got a rapturous welcome when he transformed Central Park into a huge outdoor cathedral.

He told a whooping, cheering crowd that America was a brave nation. "Do not be afraid always to search for God, the one you will truly be the land of the free and home of the brave."

The crowd in the park, green heart of New York, listened intently to his message of compassion for AIDS sufferers, the poor and the homeless.

The Pope also pressed his crusade against abortion, a burning issue in America, urging Catholics to work against it, and condemned pornography and so-called assisted suicide.

Fergie still out of favour with royals — paper

LONDON — Britain's Queen Elizabeth will keep the Duchess of York from the limelight if she reunites with her estranged husband Prince Andrew, according to the Mail On Sunday newspaper. Britain's press have reported the couple, who separated in 1992, are in love again and ready to make a new start. But Queen Elizabeth is adamant the duchess will not be allowed to resume royal duties, the Mail said. "It has become clear that the queen has no intention of rescinding the strict conditions imposed on the duchess when the marriage broke down," the newspaper said.

Madonna to play title role in Evita

LONDON (AFP) — Singer-actress Madonna will play the title role in a film adaptation of the musical Evita about the fiery wife of former Argentine leader Juan Domingo Peron, the film's producers announced. Filming under the direction of British film-maker Alan Parker is scheduled to begin Jan. 18 and last 14 weeks. The film will be shot in Europe and South America, they said. Madonna will play alongside Jonathan Pryce, in the role of Juan Domingo Peron, and Antonio Banderas in the adaptation of the musical written by Andrew Lloyd Webber and Tim Rice.

Michael Bolton is available

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Flattering female hearts be still, American pop singer Michael Bolton is available, having called off a romance with actress Nicolette Sheridan. "I think it's safe to say there is still a lot between us. It's not going to disappear," Bolton said in an interview with USA Today. "Raw is a good way to put it... Time will tell," the loquacious singer with the soulful voice said.

Julio's bad side

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — Julio Iglesias has a bad side. As the crooner greeted several hundred fans Friday at a circuit city store, he pleaded with photographers to shoot only his right side. "Please no, that's my bad side," he said to one uncooperative photographer who snapped from the left. The 53-year-old was in San Antonio for a concert to promote his new all-Spanish CD "La Carretera."

Boy George takes it like a man

DALLAS (AP) — Boy George took it like a man. The British singer ordered 3 ounces of wheatgrass juice and a tall glass of carrot-celery juice for breakfast Thursday at the Bluebonnet Cafe. Sounds healthy, all right, but most connoisseurs can only down about an ounce of wheatgrass juice at a single go. Just a gulp of the grassy-tasting drink — known for its cleansing and detoxifying powers — can make first-timers dizzy and nauseous. The singer was in town to promote his new autobiography. Take It Like A Man.

China's Jiang tries to eclipse Mao

BEIJING (R) — In a major policy statement inspired by Chairman Mao Tseung, China's President Jiang Zemin has told provincial leaders not to defy Beijing and said stability is fundamental to Communist Party rule.

In his 10,000-word speech issued by Xinhua News Agency Sunday, Mr. Jiang announced what he called 12 major relationships that China must tackle, apparently trying to eclipse Mao whose "10 major relationships" address of 1956 was among the most important of his career.

Addressing the closing of the fifth plenum of the 14th Communist Party Central Committee on Sept. 28, Mr. Jiang said many new problems had cropped up between the central and local governments.

Some localities and departments had paid undue attention to their own interests, failed to implement central government principles and policies and went so far as to disobey orders and defy prohibitions, Mr. Jiang said.

"We will not allow the existence of neither local interests nor departmental interests that jeopardize the interests of the country as a whole," he said.

Beijing has repeatedly rallied at local officials for

defying it, for example by arbitrarily raising prices and easing credit, moves the central government says jeopardize its attempts to rein in inflation.

The toppling of Beijing Communist Party boss Chen Xitong last month was seen by some political analysts as a coup for Jiang and a warning to defiant local power brokers.

To accomplish the targets and strategic tasks over the next years, China must seize opportunities, deepen reforms, open up wider to the outside world and promote development and maintain stability, Jiang said.

"Practice has shown that by handling properly the relationship between the reform, development and stability, we will be able to grasp the overall situation and ensure a smooth economic and social development. Otherwise, we will suffer and pay for it," he said.

He said China was now in a period of economic transition. With "drastic changes" taking place, it was of great and immediate significance to maintain stability, he said.

"Without a stable political and social environment, nothing can be done and it will be difficult to accomplish any plan or matter

how good it is."

Some people were getting rich too quickly, Mr. Jiang said.

National income distribution was inclined toward the individual and the share of the state was too small, he said, adding that the income gap between rich and poor was too big.

He ruled out the possibility of allowing lumbering state enterprises to declare bankruptcy en masse.

"Only by ensuring the dominant position of the public sector can we prevent polarization and achieve common prosperity," Mr. Jiang said.

"Any move to shake or give up the dominant position of the public sector will deviate from the direction of socialism."

Mr. Jiang said giving full play to the role of market mechanism and strengthening macro-control were both fundamental demands for the establishment of a socialist market economic system.

"None of them can be dispensed with. On no account should they be separated or even antagonized. To stress only one side to the neglect of the other will be detrimental to the great cause of reform and economic development," he said.

Pakistan wants U.S. mediation on Kashmir

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan (AP) — The United States should play an aggressive role in finding a peaceful solution to the worsening Indo-Pakistan dispute over the Himalayan state of Kashmir, a senior official said Sunday.

"It is not just an India and Pakistan dispute," Foreign Minister Sardar Asef Ali told reporters in the Pakistani capital. "It is the principal issue in South Asia which threatens to destabilize the region."

During his recent trip to the United States to attend the opening sessions of the United Nations General Assembly, Mr. Asef Ali called on U.S. Defense Secretary William Perry to urge the Clinton administration to mediate talks between India and Pakistan.

"Now the ball is in the court of the U.S. to pressure India to come to the negotiating table," Mr. Asef Ali said.

India and Pakistan have been at odds over the Kashmir region since the territory was divided between the two countries at the end of British rule in 1947.

Despite repeated efforts and offers from the United Nations for mediation, neither India nor Pakistan has been able to agree to meet to discuss the growing rift over Kashmir.

Pakistan believes the Kashmir issue ought to be kept separate from other bilateral topics. India, on the other hand, maintains it must be taken as only one part of overall relations between the two countries.

The dispute has triggered two of three Indo-Pakistan wars in less than five decades.

One study commissioned by the U.S. senate declared Kashmir one of the most destabilizing factors in South Asia, where both Pakistan and India are suspected to have the capacity to build nuclear weapons.

Mr. Asef Ali Sunday ruled out the possibility of direct bilateral talks with India even through regional organizations, including the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation.

Since the end of the cold war, U.S. relations have improved dramatically with India — once the former Soviet Union's largest trading partner outside of the Communist Bloc.

Washington's influence with India, along with its rebounding ties with Pakistan, could offer the United States a solid position as an honest broker between the two countries, Mr. Asef Ali said.

Taiwan to mark low-key National Day

TAIPEI (AFP) — President Lee Teng-Hui Sunday said the holding of a military review here instead of a live exercise ahead of Taiwan's National Day this week did not indicate that the island was afraid of China.

"If a war was waged, (our) firing power would be mighty. I can assure you that... our combat ability is very strong," Mr. Lee said on state-funded TV from the southern city of Kaohsiung.

Mr. Lee was referring to the Hua Hsing exercise which were held Thursday in place of the usual live exercise ahead of the National Day's 46th National Day — double-10, or Oct. 10 — Tuesday. Members of parliament last week lashed out at authorities here for toning down the drill.

Local press said the Hua Hsing (Chinese Glory) Operation on Oct. 5 at the southern naval base of Tsingy was originally intended to be a large-scale drill with live ammunition.

In addition to the toned-down drill, celebrations on the anniversary itself will also be relatively low-key, eschewing the traditional massive military parade in a bid to stabilize relations with China, analysts here said.

"In considering the reality, authorities here do not want to further provoke mainland China by holding a more ostentatious parade boasting its military might," Hu Fu, professor of political

science at National Taiwan University, said.

He added that this was also why the recent "Hua Hsing" exercise had been switched from a live drill to a mere military review.

Moses Pitagkka, the governor-general of the Solomon Islands will be the sole foreign state leader at the Oct. 10 National Day rally here.

Although 250,000 representatives from various civic and government sectors have been invited to take part in the rally and other celebration activities, only some 1,000 are from abroad.

Political analysts here say a more restrained and local celebration is necessary in the face of deteriorating relations between Taiwan and its long-time political rival China.

Relations between the two sides, never cordial, have further soured since Taiwanese President Lee Teng-Hui visited the United States in June.

Beijing, which has viewed Taiwan as a renegade province since the end of the Chinese Civil War in 1949, interpreted the trip as an attempt to promote international recognition for Taiwanese independence.

China conducted two rounds of missile tests off the north coast of Taiwan in late July and August and suspended high-level, semi-official talks with Taipei in apparent retaliation.

Beijing has vowed to seize the island by force

should it ever declare independence.

The Foreign Ministry here has refuted local press reports that the current tension between Taiwan and China is the reason for the absence of foreign heads of state at Tuesday's National Day celebration rally.

"Our self-confidence is not built on the presence of foreign state leaders," Foreign Ministry spokesman Rock Leog said last week.

Western diplomats here point out that, for the time being, Taiwan needs no further international promotion following Mr. Lee's landmark visit to the United States which cut official relations with the island in 1979.

"That visit, which infuriated China, was indeed a diplomatic breakthrough for Taipei in its relations with Washington, regardless of the consequence," a foreign envoy here told AFP.

"The trip and its result have drawn international attention to Taiwan's status and provided countries which are friendly to Taiwan a more solid cause to promote Taiwan's membership bid in the United Nations," the diplomat said.

At the ongoing General Assembly meeting of the United Nations in New York, more than 14 countries have supported the island's bid to rejoin the United Nations which ousted Taipei to admit Beijing in 1971.

Fresh tremors cause panic in quake-hit Indonesian island

SUNGAI PENUH, Indonesia (R) — Fresh tremors caused panic Sunday at the scene of a devastating earthquake on Indonesia's Sumatra Island which killed at least 78 people 24 hours earlier, officials said.

A 41-member medical team, including five specialists, was flown from Jakarta to the remote mountain region around the northwest Sumatran town of Sungai Penuh Sunday morning to treat the more than 2,000 injured.

Officials said several tonnes of rice and large quantities of quick-cooking noodles had been transported to the quake-hit areas, where residents slept overnight in tents pitched outside what was left of their homes in fear of further tremors.

Most expected to spend a second night under the open sky.

"The residents were afraid to sleep in their houses because they were afraid there might be more earthquakes and might be crushed," local government official Fuad Yusuf told Reuters.

He said two army helicopters were being used in rescue operations while another two were on standby.

Mr. Fuad said 100 rescuers had been dispatched to the area.

Irsal Nurdin, 35, of Koto

Diarr village, eight kilometres from Sungai Penuh, said his 475 residents feared for their lives when aftershocks rattled the area Sunday morning.

"This morning we panicked because of fresh tremors that lasted two or three seconds. The tremors were not severe but we were really scared," he told Reuters by telephone.

"The supply of electricity and water has still not been restored. Local authorities are distributing food, but I am sure we will need more supplies," he said.

Authorities said the death toll from the earthquake, measuring 7.0 on the open-ended Richter Scale, was 74 but one Jakarta newspaper quoted unidentified sources as saying 143 had died.

The quake flattened more than 10,000 buildings in villages around Sungai Penuh, a hill town 750 kilometres northwest of Jakarta, when it struck at 1:10 a.m. (1810 GMT Friday).

The tremor's epicentre was on land 16 kilometres southeast of Sungai Penuh which has a population of more than 40,000 people.

Many of the injured spent Saturday night outside in the cold fearing more tremors.

"We are not brave enough to enter our houses as there is news there may be aftershocks," Salmi, a resident from Pulau Sangkar village

in Kerinci district, told Antara.

Fires dotted the area around Sungai Penuh as survivors tried to stay warm during the night.

Antara said fear swept through the area around Sungai Penuh after rumours the dormant volcano Mount Kerinci was erupting and spewing lava. Authorities were swift to quash the reports.

Officials said casualties were likely to rise because the quake had triggered landslides on the slopes of Sumatra's mountain backbone.

Antara said records showed Kerinci had been hit by large quakes in 1903 and 1943 and geologists believed a 50-year cycle was at work in the region.

Residents said the quake and several aftershocks swept the area, toppling buildings and sending panic through the sleeplog town and nearby villages.

Nine-month pregnant Nisawati managed to escape with her eight-year-old son through a window of her collapsed house when the quake struck. "It was terrifying," she said.

Truckloads of military rescue teams began to arrive from the nearest major town, Jambi, 24 hours after the quake struck and began distributing food.

Sa Carneiro's body unearthed in search of sabotage evidence

LISBON, Portugal (AP) — Investigators Saturday exhumed the body of late Prime Minister Francisco Sa Carneiro in search of evidence that the 1980 plane crash that killed him was caused by sabotage.

The body of the charismatic leader of the center-right Social Democratic Party was unearthed at Lisbon's Paco De Lumiar Cemetery in the presence of a judge and removed under police guard, cemetery official Manuel Rodrigues said.

Forensic experts at Lisbon's Pathology Institute were to search for traces of metals indicating the Cessna light aircraft carrying Mr. Sa Carneiro to northern Oporto might have been brought down by a bomb and not by technical failure as was ruled after the crash.

Mr. Sa Carneiro's Swedish companion Sou Abecassis, his defence Minister Adelino Amaro Da Costa and five others were killed when their twin-

engined plane crashed on Dec. 4, 1980, near the village of Camarate just after take off from Lisbon Airport.

The crash came at a time of political turmoil five years after left-wing army captains overthrew a 48-year dictatorship.

Initial investigations ruled the crash was an accident. Later reports pointed to negligence. Only recently has evidence emerged pointing to the possibility of a bomb.

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Media in the balance

FREEDOM OF THE PRESS is one of the main pillars of pluralistic democracy and must be jealously guarded. This means that constraints on the exercise of this freedom must be applied in the most judicious manner so as not to jeopardise the democratic process and its underpinnings. As we look around and learn from well-established democracies we observe that seldom, if at all, do news reporters or columnists get thrown into jail for writing or publishing even false information. Laws on defamation and libel are the usual legal tools to bring to justice people who abuse their freedom to disseminate news, views and analysis. These laws serve as the main channel for would-be victims who can seek reparation or compensation from journalists or writers found guilty in a court of law.

Admittedly there are many countries with fledgling democracies which apply more restrictive rules on the exercise of freedom of the press for fear that false or secret information, especially on matters that affect or relate to national security and stability, could undermine their systems. In this context it is understandable that the priorities of states, which are continuously threatened by external or internal forces, are quite different from those which are more endowed with stability and security. Likewise there might be a certain need to curtail news reports, which can inflame public opinion with malice or distort basic policies with a deliberate intent to cause harm to the country. Members of the mass media in such countries carry a heavier burden than their counterparts and colleagues in other nations because they must, always be careful, even conservative, in handling what might be considered "sensitive" news. Under such circumstances the onus of proof of innocence tends to rest with journalists themselves, putting them, in the process, in a disadvantageous position.

In some countries, including ours, the public prosecutor may be vested with the right to detain a journalist if there is a prime facie case against him or her for publishing reports that are malicious, grossly wrong or harmful to state security and stability. Under Jordanian law, for example, such violations are deemed serious crimes that warrant the most severe treatment. This right, however, can still be exercised with discretion with each situation examined on its own merits. When there is no risk that the accused would try to escape trial or abuse his freedom to move around, detention can and should be avoided. When in doubt, bail may be posted by the accused especially when there are sufficient safeguards and reasonable grounds to believe that he would not jump his bail.

Jordan, in any case, also has to reckon with its international treaty obligations and see where our current laws and practices may run counter to them. It is always prudent to double check with our legal experts on how we may interpret our legislation without running the risk of contravening treaties to which we are party. This is where the discretion of our judicial authorities can and must be exercised in a manner consistent with our international obligations.

We are naturally against detaining members of the media for violating articles of the press and publications and other laws unless a court of law has examined the complaint against them and made a determination on their guilt. It is true that journalists are not above the law, nor should they be treated as a class different from others, nor must they be regarded as a distinguished group. But let us remember that in a country aspiring to be democratic a violation of the laws and freedoms of the press is not considered among the most serious criminal violations that would warrant detention without bail. Secondly, normative punishment under the various human rights treaties for those who violate legislations on freedom of the press is mainly monetary which the convicted person would have to pay as a form of reparation. Thirdly, there is not a single country in need of making democracy a way of life for itself that can afford to incur the wrath of, or send the wrong signal to, democratic forces which are keen to see our experience work.

On the other hand, the journalists themselves have to abide by the law of the land, no matter how restrictive it is, and be governed by the ethics of the profession. Irreparable damage can ensue at times, to both the journalists themselves and the people and the cause they are supposed to serve, when the responsibility to be fair, accurate and objective is shirked by reporters and editors.

Balance is essential, and we have to strive to achieve it. But while it will take us some time to reach that goal, we have to know that there is but one way to our destination. It is only through upholding democratic rules and respecting the law that we can succeed — together.

Human Rights File

'Let's target land mines and blinding laser weapons'

By Dr. Waleed M. Sadi

The Review Conference of the 1980 U.N. Weapons Convention is in its third and final week and has yet to receive appropriate interest or concern from the Arab World. The on-going conference, held in Vienna, is deliberating the prohibition or restriction of the use of certain conventional weapons deemed excessively injurious or as having indiscriminate effects, such as land mines and blinding laser guns. The magnitude of the crisis for the Middle East may be best appreciated through the shocking revelation that out of the 100 million anti-personnel mines littering the globe, about 30 million are scattered on our own soil, in our own backyards.

Regarding blinding military laser guns, their development and deployment is also on the increase worldwide, including, of course, throughout the Middle East where regional wars and internal armed conflict have been abundant.

On a global level, the size of the land mine challenge is reflected most in the appalling number of anti-personnel mines the world has manufactured over the past quarter-century alone. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) — the guardian of all Geneva Conventions and the prime promoter of international humanitarian law even before WWI — estimates that 250 million land mines, including 200 million anti-personnel mines, have been manufactured in the last 25 years, by no less than 50 countries.

Peculiar to this type of conventional weapon is its inherent nature of taking a heavy toll on human life, mostly civilian, which continues even after the cessation of hostilities. This is because mines lie planted in areas accessible to civilians, such as areas for cultivation and economic development. Mines have proven almost impossible to detect or remove, and not only by people like you or me, but also by military personnel who planted them in the first place. No wonder about 800 mostly civilian lives are claimed every month by land mines. Just to add insult to

injury, the international community still produces annually about 10 million of these terrible weapons.

Another reason for the continued carnage is attributed to the high price of mine-clearing, estimated by some experts to cost \$300-500 per mine, while manufacturing such mines is a snap at about \$20 each. We can only begin to imagine this catastrophic side of the equation when developing countries are forced, through sheer economic constraints, to leave land mines, buried during regional or domestic armed conflicts, in unmarked places to be detected only when a child, woman or farmer step on one, triggering a bloody explosion.

Yet the international community is still reluctant to take affirmative action against such weapons even at this late hour. To date, there are international humanitarian principles calling for clear distinction between civilians and combatants in armed conflict. In addition there are specific treaties such as the 1980 UN Weapons Convention and its Protocol II that purports to control the use of mines, booby-traps and similar devices. But the shortcomings of existing customary and international laws are proven by the failure to contain the problem and reverse its tide. Awareness and recognition are on the increase that the current regime governing the use of such weapons is simply not working and all the while more people are losing their lives or limbs because legislation is neither sufficient nor commensurate with the size and dimension of the crisis.

Besides, not many states have signed and ratified the modest 1980 Convention. Only 50 governments chose to become parties to the 1980 convention, demonstrating the indifference of so many countries, including Arab and developing countries which suffer the most from land mines in both human and economic terms. The convening of the Review Conference of the 1980 UN Weapons Convention also provides an occasion to invite Jordan to adhere to it, as I am sure it is sheer oversight on our part

not to have become party to it until now.

And since the limited Convention is only applicable to "international" armed conflicts, the developing countries including of course the Arab World will continue to suffer because they provide the main theatre for internal armed conflicts that are bloody and vicious.

Unfortunately, the recommendation of the Group of Experts assembled for the purpose of proposing more forceful measures against mines falls short of the desired objective because it adopts the view that additional restrictions and safeguards would do the necessary job for humanity. This contrasts with the view of the ICRC and an increasing number of governments that consider there is but one solution to the endemic carnage and slaughter of people: the total prohibition of the manufacture of land mines, as opposed to the mere introduction of cosmetic changes to existing international humanitarian law.

Perhaps it is too late to change the course of the Review Conference on this point. But it is never too late to start lobbying for a more humane and enlightened posture that insists on a complete ban on the use and manufacture of land mines as a real and effective panacea to the current carnage of innocent people.

Fortunately though, the Group of Experts did recommend the total prohibition of the use and manufacture of blinding laser weapons. This is a great and timely success, in view of the growing technology of blinding laser guns and their availability not only to states across the board, but also to factions or groups. In the meantime, Israel is known to have a crash military programme to develop this kind of weapon. No doubt other Middle Eastern states would respond likewise, sooner rather than later, unless the problem is nipped in the bud in this part of the world.

We have every hope that the Review Conference will not fail humanity at least in this area. Meanwhile the vigil against the use and manufacture of land mines must continue unabated until we attain our ultimate objective.

Why Russia opposes NATO expansion

By G. H. Jansen

ONE ELEMENT noticeably absent from Russia's campaign against the eastward expansion of NATO is that Moscow has not, so far, given reasons for its opposition. But a reason given to Indian correspondents by a Russian official in 1961, soon after the Belgrade non-aligned summit conference, may perhaps explain why at present Russia, though firmly opposed to the external expansion of NATO, does not say why.

The half-dozen Indian correspondents in Belgrade for the summit in September '61 were very pleasantly surprised when they were told that they were invited by the Soviet Union to accompany the Indian prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, to Moscow for talks between Nehru and Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev.

In Moscow the visit became more interesting for the journalists because the Russian officer accompanying the group was the press attaché at the Soviet embassy in New Delhi and already knew some of the journalists. The single most enjoyable item on the usual dull official programme of speeches and visits to Soviet show-pieces was a performance at the Bolshoi theatre of the well-known ballet "Romeo and Juliet" and not, this time, danced to the all-too-well known music of Tchaikovsky, but to a newer composition by the Russian composer Prokofiev. And a splendid performance it was during which the prime minister, though a well known lover of Western classical music, seemed notably silent and withdrawn.

After we returned from the Bolshoi performance to the Sovetskaya Hotel, we journalists and the Russian officer settled down to discuss the state of the world over the inevitable bottle of vodka. There was one question that especially interested this journalist and a news agency colleague. Whether it was the lateness of the hour or the affect of the vodka, the officer "opened up" and spoke frankly. And so when we pestered him with this question, "Why is Russia, a Great Power, stronger than ever after its victory in World War II, so afraid of a wrecked and divided Germany that it would do everything it could to stop Germany being put back on its feet by the West?"

The Russian said, "We don't usually discuss this, but I will tell you why. The broad road we took this evening from this hotel straight into Red Square and the Bolshoi, had huge holes in it at the end of the war. Not unrepaired pot

holes and not bomb craters, but shell holes made by German artillery from the outskirts of the city. That was proof of how far the Germans reached. And that German army came here all the way from the Rhine (a pardonable exaggeration — the Elbe would have been more accurate) and the German soldiers fought their way here, all the way across Poland and more than half of European Russia. And it took a Russian winter and, of course, the Red Army to stop them just in time.

"The Germans are a terrible and a formidable people. They can never be trusted and so must be kept weak by being divided and disarmed."

Recall those minatory words now that Germany is reunited and rearmed and is half-in and half-out of NATO — the Russian nightmare has come true.

Germany is by far the strongest state in the Western European Union and NATO (except for the U.S.), so for a suspicious, nationalistic Russia, no longer a really great power, NATO is quite simply Germany.

Thus, the seemingly innocent eastwards expansion of NATO and the attempts by the former Soviet satellites and

'For a suspicious nationalist Russia, no longer a great power, NATO is quite simply Germany'

republics, especially Poland and the three Baltic states and even Belarus, to connect up with NATO are, for Russians, all preludes to a possible repetition of Napoleon and Hitler knocking on the doors of Moscow.

The words of the Russian officer were an impressive presentation of the Russian position. They made sense and they still do. The Western advocates of NATO's eastward expansion, which the Russians have most recently called "a challenge," will have to overcome a deep-seated Russian



complex with roots dating back almost two centuries, to 1810.

It was only many years later that we discovered why on that September evening in 1961 Nehru had seemed so withdrawn from the performance at the Bolshoi. He had gone to Moscow on his own initiative, not on a Russian invitation, later extended pro forma, to talk to Khrushchev and ask him, since Russia was an ally of China in the Moscow-Beijing axis, to urge restraint on the Chinese who were pushing south against the Sino-Indian frontier.

And that day Khrushchev had told the Indian prime minister that the Moscow-Beijing axis was no more, because the Russian and Chinese communist parties had fundamental ideological differences. The Chinese had told the Russians, who were by then anti-Stalinist, that they, the Chinese, would continue along the Stalinist path, which they still do.

Therefore, Moscow had no restraining influence on Beijing and India and China were on their own in an eye-ball to eye-ball confrontation.

Among other things this meant that Nehru had to drop his sentimental "India-China brothers" policy which, unfortunately, he did not do quickly enough and the two countries soon went to war.

If the Russians keep silent on why they do not want a German-dominated NATO on their western borders it is because they can hardly admit that their policy today is moved by old, atavistic fears, which are no longer realistic.

LETTERS

Where is the comradery

To the Editor:

AS A FORMER journalist, my displeasure with a system that allows the detention of a journalist for his writings before a trial declares him guilty is only superseded by my displeasure with a journalistic community that allows one of its own to be jailed without sounding a peep of protest.

Why are Jordanian journalists so preoccupied with arguing whether Amman's Al-Hayat correspondent, Mr. Salameh Nematt, was right or wrong in publishing his article on a government investigation of alleged bribe-taking by Jordanian journalists and officials? That is a matter for the courts to decide. What they should be voicing instead is opposition to this detention of their colleague.

I find it embarrassing that international organisations such as the Paris-based Reporters Without Frontiers are questioning the human rights and press freedom implications of Mr. Nematt's detention, while his own colleagues, who surely have much more at stake, are either attacking him in the local press or, at best, keeping silent on the issue.

Jordanian journalists often complain about the restrictive nature of the 1993 Press and Publication Law. But why do these people expect the government to protect and expand their rights when they themselves are too timid to take a stand and rally around a colleague whose situation they may very likely face one day?

Readers may wonder why I am writing this letter anonymously. It is not due to fear of voicing a seemingly unpopular opinion, but rather because my present employment does not allow me the freedom to express personal opinions in the press. Still, my frustration at the sad state of journalism in Jordan is such that I find writing an unsigned letter slightly better than not writing one at all.

Name withheld upon request

The press we want

To the Editor:

AS A concerned Jordanian, I was interested to see that a journalist for a London-based Arabic newspaper had been arrested and jailed pending trial in connection with an allegedly defamatory article he had written. I am not going to discuss this particular case as it is now before the courts, nor shall I repeat the allegations made in the article in question because I do not want to give them further publicity. Nevertheless there is a much wider, general issue at stake which needs to be urgently debated in Jordan if we are to successfully fulfill the high aims for our country set by His Majesty King Hussein.

It is my firm belief that the Press and Publications Law allows the state prosecutor to put on trial any journalist for what he or she may have written, in a manner that contradicts all international norms of respect for freedom of the press. In a democracy it is the role and responsibility of the press to challenge falsehoods and seek out the truth. Such battles should be fought through public debate not through law courts. Of course any time an individual is falsely accused of something, he or she has the right to bring a libel action against the perpetrator and seek damages. But do we really need the prosecutor to bring a court case on behalf of the entire country? By doing so, doesn't he simply attract attention and importance to the very allegations that are to be challenged? Surely it makes more sense to allow the press to do its job and debunk any claims that insult the intelligence and honour of the country. Ultimately we must have faith that ordinary Jordanians are perfectly capable of judging the issues before them. Yet they are hampered from using that judgement if the press is constrained by regulations and controls that put journalists in fear of imprisonment merely for doing their jobs. People cannot exercise responsible choices, as democracy requires them to do, if they are not exposed to a lively and honest political debate. In other words there simply can be no democracy without a free and vigorous press.

If the standards of our Press and Publications Law were

applied in a respected and ancient democracy such as Britain, then half of that country's population might be paying fines or serving prison sentences and world-class newspapers such as *The Times*, *The Guardian* or *The Economist* would have long ago closed down or simply become colourless vehicles for petty gossip and marriage announcements. Is that the kind of country we want Jordan to be? Is that the kind of press we want to have?

I am sure that many journalists and politicians have been offended by allegations made against them in the past. But isn't it their job to use their respected position in society to debate and question all issues that affect them and society at large? I doubt that there are many professional journalists in Jordan who feel they need the state to protect them against every foreign writer with an axe to grind, but if any journalist is incapable of defending him or herself on the pages of a newspaper then perhaps he or she should seek a different vocation. Finally, I think it is clear for all to see that continued over-involvement of the state in regulating the press is delaying the process of democratisation championed by His Majesty King Hussein. The mere possibility of prosecution has surely dissuaded many from openly expressing their views on even some rather innocuous subjects.

Finally let me say that I believe in Jordan and I believe that His Majesty King Hussein's endeavours have lifted our country to a position of international respect far outweighing our size and resources. It is our duty, therefore, to our King and country to be part of a responsible, constructive and equal political debate without having to look over our shoulders. Restraints on the freedom of the press severely damage Jordan's image in the world. They risk casting a shadow over His Majesty's great achievements on the national and the world stage. If we allow that to happen then we will all be worse off. It is time to reexamine the Press and Publications Law in the name of democracy, of peace and the farsighted vision of Jordan set out by His Majesty King Hussein.

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U.S. jobless rate steady at 5.6%

WASHINGTON (AP) — The U.S. unemployment rate held steady at 5.6 per cent in September as 121,000 new jobs were created, fresh evidence the economy is rebounding modestly from last spring's slump.

"This signals a slow, gradual bounce back from the very weak conditions of the first half of the year," said Daryl Delano of Cahners Economics, a Newton, Massachusetts, forecasting service.

"The basic message is that the economy has rounded the corner and is back on the forward track," agreed Robert G. Dederick, an economic consultant with the Northern Trust Co. in Chicago. "We have had our soft landing and we are now in a steady recovery."

The Labour Department said Friday the unemployment rate remained at 5.6 per cent for a second straight month. After reaching 5.8 per cent in April, the jobless rate has bounced between 5.6 per cent and 5.7 per cent for the last five months.

The report said that although job growth slowed from the 262,000 pace in August, every sector except manufacturing and government shared in the expansion.

The services industry added 106,000 jobs, retail payrolls grew by 48,000 and builders hired 16,000 new construction workers.

There was little sign of price pressures in the report. It said average hourly earnings increased by four cents to \$11.52 in September after falling two cents a month earlier. That meant average hourly earnings have risen just three per cent over the last year.

Stock and bond prices fell when the markets opened as traders focused on the job growth figures, less than many analysts had expected. But they rallied by midday on reports of stronger-than-expected third-quarter earnings.

Factories, which were particularly cramped by earlier economic weakness, lost 32,000 more jobs in September, boosting losses to 200,000 since last March. But analysts noted that orders have picked up recently, which should pare inventories and spur production and employment.

"Manufacturers are now getting control over merchandise that has been piling up and I'd expect a resumption of manufacturing job growth in future months," Labour Secretary Robert B. Reich predicted.

Government employment dropped by 30,000 after surging by 71,000 in August. The Labour Department said the figures reflected the increasing trend for schools to open in August rather than September.

Analysts said the employment figures and other recent reports were consistent with economic growth of between two per cent and 2.5 per cent at an annual rate in the quarter that ended in September. The economy grew at an anemic 1.3 per cent rate from April through June.

Since the economic appears to be bouncing back, many analysts believe the Federal Reserve will leave interest rates unchanged, after having cut them by a quarter-point in July to stimulate the economy. It was the first decrease in nearly three years.

"I think the Fed can sit back in happy comfort that they have done an excellent job in fine-tuning the economy," said economist Eugene Shernoff of M.A. Schapiro and Co. in New York. "They've got the economy where they want it."

More than half the September job growth was in business services, with temporary-help firms accounting for a big increase of 35,000 jobs. Retail employment was boosted by the addition of 20,000 restaurant and bar jobs.

Hiring in the health industry remained strong with a gain of 25,000. Employment at auto dealerships was up 5,000.

But with the end of the summer vacation season, the amusement and recreation industry lost 13,000 jobs. And clothing stores continued to shed workers, reporting a particularly steep 13,000 decline.

As the economy slowed from robust growth in 1994, employment growth has also slowed. Payroll jobs had been rising by an average of 365,000 per month in the final quarter of 1994. But in the just completed July-September quarter, the increase averaged just 130,000 per month.

Bahrain plans to develop stock exchange

MANAMA (R) — Bahrain is studying a five-year plan to develop its stock exchange. Commerce Minister Ali Saleh Al Saleh said.

Mr. Saleh, speaking on Bahrain Television on Friday night, gave no details of the plan but said it was aimed at developing the official bourse into a regional stock exchange.

Bahrain and Oman, two of the few Arab markets allowing foreign investors, signed an agreement earlier this year linking their bourses, allowing cross-listing of firms.

The move was the first of its kind in the Middle East. Mr. Saleh said liquidity shortage after investors turned to real estate investment and higher interest rates on deposits with banks were to blame for the drop of share prices in Bahrain.

Bahrain's official share index, continuing a decline in the past three weeks, lost 7.37 points in the week ending on Thursday to 1,316.08 points.

But trading volume soared to more than 6.4 million shares worth 1.2 million dinars (\$3.2 million) from 3.7 million shares worth 327,671 dinars (\$869,154) the previous week.

30,000 Boeing workers go on strike

SEATTLE (AP) — Unions representing more than 30,000 Boeing Co. production-line workers in three American states went on strike Friday at the world's No. 1 maker of jetliners.

The walkout began at midnight after the Machinists Union voted 3-to-1 to reject a contract offer that would have required them for the first time to pay health insurance premiums.

Workers set up picket lines at Boeing plants in the Seattle area, Wichita, Kansas, and Gresham, Oregon. No talks were scheduled.

"This is about the maddest I've seen people in this union," and I've been with Boeing nearly 30 years," said Bill Johnson, president of Machinists District Lodge 751, with 23,500 Boeing workers.

Boeing, the world's largest manufacturer of commercial jet aircraft and one of the nation's leading exporters, will try to maintain production with supervisors and workers who cross picket lines, said spokesman Paul Binder.

The machinists' strike is the second in six years, the shortest period of labour peace in Boeing's 79-year history. They walked out for 48 days in 1989.

Production has fallen sharply as aircraft orders dried up during the recession of the early 1990s, Boeing's worldwide employment has dropped from a peak of 165,787 in 1989 to 105,230, with about 71,700 in Washington state.

At the Wichita plant, one striker's sign said, "export planes, not jobs" — a reference to the company's use of outside contractors.

The rejected contract offer would have required employee contributions to health insurance premiums, as well as higher deductibles and copayments. It also lacked provisions sought by the union to limit outside contracting.

Boeing's three-year con-

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PHILADELPHIA INVESTMENT BANK	2250	3502	1.550 1.550
BANKS SECTOR	113821	535343	INDEX NUMBER: 191.71 CHANGE: -1.347
JORDANIAN ELECTRIC POWER	28078	45930	1.650 1.630
NATIONAL PORTFOLIO SECURITIES	6411	13235	2.070 2.070
ESTATE INVESTMENT	250	260	1.080 1.040
MACHINERY EQUIP. RESTING & MAINTENANCE	1000	690	1.680 1.680
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ARAB INTER. FOR INVESTMENT & EDUCATION	6150	19360	3.160 3.170
BARSA PRIVATE UNIVERSITY	3000	4945	3.310 3.300
UNION LAND DEVELOPMENT CORP.	88600	98812	1.110 1.120
SERVICES SECTOR	136839	189051	INDEX NUMBER: 127.12 CHANGE: -0.237
THE JORDAN CEMENT FACTORIES	3947	14106	3.590 3.560
JORDAN PHOSPHATE MINES	1022	2118	3.070 3.070
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INDUSTRIAL SECTOR	124666	205916	INDEX NUMBER: 122.51 CHANGE: -0.517
GRAND TOTAL	375326	930310	INDEX NUMBER: 158.11 CHANGE: -0.282
NO. OF TRADED SHARES IN PARALLEL MARKET	155730		
VALUE TRADED IN PARALLEL MARKET	129579		

Financial Markets

Weekly Financial Exchange Market Summary (October 2 - October 6, 1995)

The U.S. unit appreciated noticeably against the yen last week, while depreciating marginally against the mark and stabilizing against sterling. It ended the week 0.40 per cent lower against the mark and 0.82 per cent higher against the yen.

The dollar depreciated against European currencies Monday, while appreciating against the yen. Reports indicated that the dollar came under pressure as traders sold it to buy Deutschmarks and Swiss francs. Analysts indicated that despite the selling pressures, most traders were reluctant to close their long dollar positions ahead of the G-7 meeting at the end of the week. Market sentiment towards the U.S. unit was mixed, as analysts were divided on whether the G-7 meeting will result in a communiqué that would prop up the dollar.

The U.S. unit rose against other major currencies Tuesday, as more traders thought that the G-7 countries will stress the importance of a higher dollar at the end of the week. Meanwhile, the dollar lost ground against the Canadian dollar on news that the Quebec referendum will result in Quebec remaining a part of Canada.

The dollar continued its appreciation against sterling Wednesday, but depreciated against the mark and the yen. The upcoming G-7 meeting continued to influence the market. Worries that the G-7 countries will overlook the dollar's recent decline mounted and caused many traders to close their long dollar positions. These worries surface when a Japanese official said that the current exchange rates of the dollar are fairly valued, and as such, any central bank intervention will not result in a higher dollar unless it was accompanied by structural changes in the U.S. economy.

The dollar continued its depreciation Thursday. It declined on worries about the G-7 meeting. The selling pressure on the U.S. unit eased at the end of the week, however, as traders closed their short dollar positions ahead of the G-7 meeting the following day. The dollar also rose on comments by U.S. Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin that a higher dollar is in the interest of the United States. Meanwhile, the U.S. labour department released September's employment report showing a rise of 121,000 in non-farm payrolls, compared to a rise of 262,000 the previous month. Unemployment remained at 5.6 per cent. The U.S. unit, thus ended the week at 1.4218 marks, 100.55 yen and at \$1.5830 to sterling.

Currency	Sept. 29, 1995	Oct. 6, 1995
U.S. Dollar	5.78	5.75
Sterling Pound	0.62	0.75
Deutsche Mark	4.10	3.95
Swiss Franc	2.36	2.38
French Franc	0.12	0.28
Japanese Yen	0.51	0.62

Currency	Oct. 2, 1995	Oct. 6, 1995
U.S. Dollar	0.7120	0.7140
Sterling Pound	1.1244	1.1300
Deutsche Mark	0.2999	0.3024
Swiss Franc	0.6209	0.6240
French Franc	0.1423	0.1430
Japanese Yen	0.7081	0.7116
United Kingdom	0.4457	0.4489
Swedish Krona	0.0441	0.0443
Belgian Franc	0.0441	0.0443

Source: Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin

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Business Daily Beat

'4,000 engineers to work in Malaysia'

The Jordan Engineers Association (JEA) and a Malaysian delegation which visited Jordan recently agreed to provide 4,000 Jordanian engineers with job opportunities in Malaysia. Director of the JEA's Training and Employment Department Hisham Khreisat said. Mr. Khreisat said about 200 Jordanian engineers already work in Malaysia. He said his department started since last month contacting embassies of Arab Gulf countries in Amman as well as foreign industrial and engineering firms to find jobs for unemployed engineers. He said after contacts with 7,000 firms, the association managed to find job opportunities to 35 engineers. He said he hoped the number to increase as JEA's contacts continue. He noted that there are 1,275 engineers who applied to the department to find them jobs. Some 10,000 Jordanian engineers registered with the JEA work abroad. According to Mr. Khreisat, the number of engineers registered with the association stands at 34,600 and that unemployment among engineers currently stands at 3.5 per cent. (Al Aswaq)

A feasibility study on digging a canal between the Red Sea and the Dead Sea will be completed within six months, informed sources said. The sources said the project will not produce results before 10-15 years. They added that the study is financed by the World Bank. The sources also told Al Aswaq Arabic daily that Jordan and Israel have agreed to build an international airport on the two countries' border, north of Aqaba, and to launch a railroad project linking the Red Sea with the Dead Sea. According to the sources, the airport will be built on the Jordanian side of the border and is expected to serve between 1.5 and 3 million passengers annually. Passengers using the airport will have the choice to either cross into Israel or Jordan once arriving at the airport. The \$500,000 feasibility study on the airport project, expected to be finished by mid 1997, was financed by the U.S. The airport is expected to start operations within five years. The informed sources also said that the railway project will be used in transporting Jordanian and Israeli phosphates to the Aqaba and Eilat ports on the Red Sea. They added that Japan might also finance a Jordanian project worth \$15.10 million to build four bridges over the Jordan River. (Al Aswaq)

* The National Information Centre is about to complete a wide-range data base which will be used by conferees at the MENA summit. The data base includes figures on development witnessed in various sectors in the Kingdom as well as the history of Jordan. The centre has also prepared information on Jordanian companies, industries, the investment climate in Jordan and the Jordanian projects which will be presented at the summit. The centre will also place computer screens in the summit's various halls to be used by participants. (Al Dustour)

* The Housing and Urban Development Department (HUDD) has over the past 30 years carried out about 100 projects which benefited 225,000 people. HUDD director general Yousef Hiyasat said. (Al Dustour)

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Sports

Bulgaria thrashes Albania

PARIS (AFP) — Bulgaria notched up a 3-0 victory over Albania Saturday night as the surprise heroes of last year's World Cup almost certainly booked their place in next year's European Championships.

Yordan Letchkov, whose winner at USA '94 sensationally knocked the holders Germany out of the quarter-finals, was back on the scoresheet in Sofia with a quarter of an hour gone.

The midfielder beat two defenders before unleashing a superb left-foot shot into the right-hand corner.

The Bulgarians promptly relaxed their grip on the game, allowing Albania to launch a series of attacks before the break.

With a 35,000 crowd behind them, Bulgaria came out for the second half looking for more goals — only to run into the brick wall of the Albanian defence, and a string magnificent saves by keeper Hristo Stoichkov.

However, the wall finally crumbled in the 80th minute when maverick striker Hristo Stoichkov

fired in a shot from the left which Strakosha failed to bold, and Emil Kostadinov stepped up to score.

Kostadinov, whose last-minute winner in 1993 denied France a place at the World Cup, added his second a minute later from a Letchkov header, following a scramble in the Albanian goal.

Stoichkov, who left Barcelona for Parma this season, said: "It was a difficult match, but now we are 120 per cent sure of going to the finals."

Bulgaria, unbeaten with seven wins from eight matches and a total of 22 points, are the runaway leaders of Group 7. Second placed Germany, who were to play Moldova late Sunday, are six points behind.

After this weekend's matches, both sides will have two more games to play — the second one being against each other November 15. Only the group winners are guaranteed a place at the championships in England.

Belgium 2, Armenia 0

Belgium meanwhile kept alive their remote hopes of qualifying, beating Armenia 2-0.

Luc Nilis scored both goals, pouncing on defensive errors. A poor clearance in the 28th minute enabled him to strike a superb far-post drive, and he was left with only the goalkeeper to beat in the 39th.

The Belgians took it easy in the second half, happy enough to sit on their two-goal lead.

"It was a good first half for us," said Belgian coach Paul van Himst. "But I'm not happy how we played in the second half."

Belgium remain third in Group 2 on 14 points, behind defending champions Denmark (17) and Spain (22), who have both played a game less.

Czech Republic beat Belarus 2-0 in their Group 5 qualifier, consolidating their second place with 18 points, two behind Norway.

Lewis stops Morrison in 6th round

ATLANTIC CITY, New Jersey (AP) — Lennox Lewis, known for his right-hand punching power, scored three of four knock-downs with his left hand and stopped Tommy Morrison in the sixth round of a heavyweight bout Saturday night at Convention Centre.

The 30-year-old Lewis, a former WBC champion, was too strong for Morrison and dominated the bout from the outset, knocking Morrison down in the second, fifth and sixth rounds, cutting him over the right eye and under the left eye, and almost closing the right.

The end came when referee Mills Lane stopped the bout at 1:22 of the sixth round after Morrison got up from the second knockdown of the round.

Lewis showed that he definitely is not just a one-handed fighter as he did tremendous damage with his left. He did score in the fifth round with a right uppercut, but the left was his big weapon on this night before a crowd of 8,369 fans.

Morrison, on the other hand, known for his left hook, threw few of them, landing several rights to the head and working well with both hands to the body.

"He was tough, very tough," said the 26-year-old Morrison, "trying to fight guys like that with that reach is tough, especially with one eye. I'm not used to fighting with one eye."

The right eye was cut in the second round when Lewis landed a left hook to the head that also put Morrison down briefly. Lewis then worked on that eye with stiff left jabs and it was all but closed by the fifth round.

Morrison seemed to have an edge in the first round when he circled and got in a couple of jabs and a right to the head. Then Lewis took charge in the second round and by the fourth it seemed to be just a question of when Lewis would finish it and not whether he would win.

Lewis, 241, hurt Morrison, 227, badly with a left hook and right hand early in the

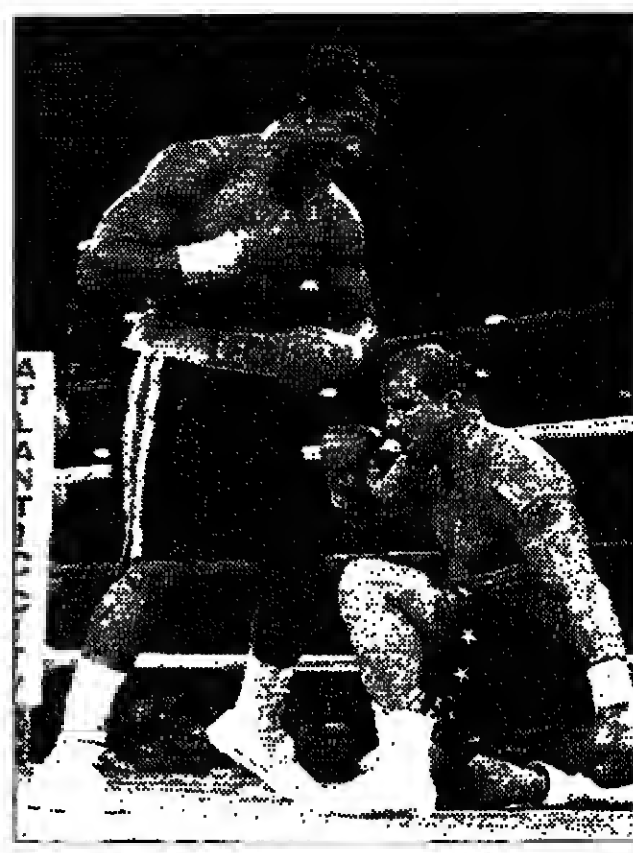
fifth round, and then knocked him down with a right uppercut at about 2:25 in the round. Morrison jumped up quickly from that knockdown, as he did from the two in the sixth.

A Lewis left jab scored the first knockdown early in the sixth and then a left hook produced the final knockdown.

"I was real relaxed out there," Lewis said. "I relied on my patience and a good jab. I was taking my time because I knew Tommy was getting tired."

It was Lewis' third victory since he lost the WBC title when he was stopped in the second round by Oliver McCall Sept. 24, 1994, at Wembley, England. His record is 28-1 with 24 knockouts. Morrison lost for the first time in nine fights, dating back two Oct. 29, 1993, when he was stopped in the first round by Michael Bent.

Lewis earned \$2.4 million, while Morrison made \$2.1 million.



England's Lennox Lewis knocks the USA's Tommy Morrison to the canvas in the sixth round of their 12 round non-title bout Oct. 7 at the Atlantic City Convention Centre (Reuters photo)

Player suspended over haircut

ROME (R) — Italian Minor League soccer player Domenico Onofrio has been suspended for refusing to get his hair cut as ordered and then talking to the media about it, newspapers reported Sunday.

The Gazzetta Dello Sport said southern C2 club Matera had ordered its long-haired players to get a cut.

When Onofrio turned up following the deadline with his hair as long as before, he was barred from training.

The 19-year-old player then got his hair cut but told the media about the incident, prompting the club to suspend him on Saturday and impose a press silence on other players.

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Justice department regards Steffi as accomplice, report claims

BONN (AFP) — The Mannheim Justice Department regards women's tennis world number one Steffi Graf as an "accomplice" to her father who is facing tax evasion charges, the

German weekly Der Spiegel claims in a report to be published Monday.

The magazine quotes a document from the department investigating Graf's financial affairs

that lists her as an "accomplice".

It adds the German Tennis Federation (DTB) had not declared Graf's prize-money earned in domestic tournaments.

The report follows

Saturday's comments by Opel Chairman David Herrman that there was no question of Opel ending their sponsorship deal with Graf over her tax problems.

He said she was an innocent victim and had always been faithful in her dealings with Opel.

Graf's father Peter has been detained since Aug. 2 while inquiries continue.

Steffi Graf was inter-

viewed for almost eight hours by investigators this week but public prosecutor Peter Wechsung said they had uncovered no new evidence to justify detaining her.

Graf's earnings since

1982 amount to 180 million marks (\$120 million). She took over the management of her financial affairs after her father was arrested.

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AIR FRANCE HOPPECKE

Legislature will fare far better with sound reforms, experts say

By Sae'da Kilani
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Lower House of the Jordanian Parliament might not be performing its role properly when compared with legislatures in developed countries, but it should not be long before it reaches the same level if consistent reforms are made, local and foreign specialists said Sunday.

Parliamentarians and specialists attending discussions on the second day of the seminar on "Parliamentary Work: Prospects and Realities" heavily lashed out at the poor performance of deputies and loopholes in the House's bylaws. However, they pointed to planned measures that ensure a better performance of the House and consolidate its role in the Jordanian political life.

Deputy Abdul Razzaq Tubeishat said the poor performance of the House was basically due to the improper functioning of parliamentary blocs under the dome. One of the major impediments, he said, is the members' non-commitment to the decisions taken by the bloc.

Members of the same bloc deliver speeches reflecting different points of views on the same topic but reiterate, at the end of their speeches, their loyalty and commitment to the speech delivered by the bloc's spokesperson, said Dr. Tubeishat.

Problems and divisions surface especially when government reshuffles occur or if a

new cabinet is formed, he added.

Furthermore, deputies do not get proper attention from the bloc when they raise issues of concern to them or to their constituencies, Dr. Tubeishat said. "Their demands and proposals are met with indifference most of the time," he said.

The 12th Parliament, elected in 1993, saw the birth of six major blocs — "six in theory but four in practice," said Dr. Tubeishat.

The six blocs are the Islamic Action Front (17 members); the National Action Front (NAF — 17 members); the Democratic Alliance (21 members originally but 10 at present); the Jordanian National Front (nine members); and the Brotherly Bloc (five members) and the rest of the 80 members of the House are independents.

According to Dr. Tubeishat, there are only four blocs: the IAF bloc, the NAF, a four-member "leftist" bloc and "moderate centrists" who number 42.

In another vein, Wolfgang Zeh, senior staff member of the German Bundestag administration, criticised the routine forwarding of draft laws to one legislative committee in parliament and said it was a waste of time because the law would be discussed at length many times. He proposed laws be referred to specialised committees that would study the legislation from all aspects with the recommendations of specialists and interested deputies.

"In the German Bundestag, very minor changes are done; there is no discussion of the details in the plenary session," he said.

Deputy Abdul Karim Dughmi on Saturday presented a detailed plan to amend the House's bylaws, especially those related to the functions and duties of the House's committees.

Mr. Dughmi proposed increasing the number of committees to 13 from the present four. Each committee, as it is the case with ministries, will be specialised in a particular field and will discuss related laws in that field and present recommendations to the full House.

But the formation of specialised committees necessitates the establishment of a special department that groups specialists and experts from outside the dome, Mr. Dughmi said. This department should be given the task of studying all draft laws and be able to present recommendations to the respective committees.

Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs Abdul Majid Azzam, who is also a deputy, tackled the relationship between the legislative and executive powers concentrating mainly on the double role of deputy/minister. He proposed that the provision that allows parliamentarians to become ministers be cancelled. He also called for taking separate vote of confidence on each

(Continued on page 7)



EARTHQUAKE: A local resident describes the damage done to a mosque in Sungai Penh, central Sumatra in Indonesia, by an earthquake that measured 7 on the Richter scale on Sunday (see story inside) (AFP photo)

Karaki, Abul Ragheb urge media to convey right image of Jordan

Ministers meet local press to discuss MENA summit coverage

AMMAN (Petra) — Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Information Khaled Karaki on Sunday called on the Jordanian media to rise to the occasion at their month's Middle East and North Africa (MENA) economic conference and to relay to the world the true image about the Kingdom's achievements, stability and democratic process.

Addressing editors of the local press, Dr. Karaki said there was "no need for exaggeration in relaying this image, nor is there a need for linking this major event with unrealistic great prospects

and aspirations, but there is a need for Jordan to prove its stand and its major role in the region."

The minister said he had reservations about certain articles that tend to harm the concepts of freedom and democracy. "Such articles stem from lack of political awareness or lack of experience in understanding or analysing situations," he said.

"It is not in the interest of anyone to see the image of the country distorted with irresponsible and destructive criticism," he said. Biased attitudes and slander even between newspapers them-

selves will mislead observers about the country and result in misunderstanding of its stands and subsequent unjust attitude towards the Kingdom."

He said that the media were still involved in controversy over the role of the official information services and relations between the Ministry of Information and the Jordan Press Association about information policies and the country's national strategy.

The minister said that the media, together with the official information services, should have a "common goal

of enhancing the long democratic march reflecting the bright image about Jordan and its political, social and economic achievements."

Addressing the meeting was also Minister of Industry and Trade Ali Abul Ragheb, who discussed preparations for the MENA conference, which, he said, will be a regional as well as international forum where the private sector will play the local role.

Noting that the conference enjoys international backing, the minister said that up to

(Continued on page 7)

Snorers have fragile heart

TEL AVIV (AFP) — People who snore run a far higher risk of heart attack than quiet sleepers, according to an Israeli medical report published Sunday. Doctors at Assaf Harofeh Hospital near Tel Aviv, in an extract from their report in Maariv newspaper, said 93 per cent of patients with heart problems were found to be snorers. Most fatal attacks occur between 4 and 8 a.m. The amount of sleep was also an important factor. The death rate is 70 per cent higher among people who sleep less than six hours a night.

Chinese lured by cable TV

BEIJING (AFP) — Between 25 and 30 per cent of Chinese families will have cable television in their homes by 2005, the official China Daily said Sunday. Quoting Electronics Ministry official Hua Deqing, the number of Chinese homes that subscribe to cable TV will at least triple within 10 years, the newspaper said. According to government projections, the number of subscribers will rise from the 30 million at the end of 1994 to 60 million in 2000 and 100 million in 2005, the report said. Cable television, which appeared here at the beginning of the 1990s, currently offers music, sports, and films. Cable television hook ups are available in most new buildings in Beijing for about 10 yuan (\$1.20) a month.

Ill-fated Russian circus finally going home

DAVAO, Philippines (R) — A Russian circus stranded without money for seven months in the southern Philippines and forced to survive on charity is finally going home. Barring further strokes of bad luck, a Russian cargo plane arrives early this week to fly all that is left of the circus — 13 performers and nine animals — back to Moscow Thursday, members of the group said Sunday. "When I come here first time...I don't have friend. Now I have plenty friends," troupe leader Boris Fedotov said in an interview Sunday. He was referring to Filipino officials and citizens who gave the Russians food, money and shelter to enable them to get through the bad times. The troupe originally numbered 37 performers and more than 20 animals when it arrived in the Philippines in July last year for a series of shows. After several performances, the group and its Filipino promoter broke up in a row over money and the Russians have been stranded since March in Davao, 980 kilometres south of Manila. Penalties, they had to depend on Davao residents to survive. Market vendors gave them leftover vegetables as feed for the starving animals, taxi drivers sometimes gave them free rides, and a businessman allowed them use of a vacant lot which enabled them to put up a mini-zoo that brought in some money. The local government exempted them from paying taxes, and a businessman treated them to occasional free plane tickets that enabled a majority of the troupe members to return separately to Russia earlier, with some of the animals. Misfortune first hit the troupe earlier this year when two circus donkeys and three ponies were electrocuted after a live wire fell on their cage after a show in another city. A llama died of massive diarrhoea in July.

Several European giants expected at MENA summit

By Francesca Ciriaci
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Reflecting a rising European interest in business opportunities into the region, businessmen from nearly 100 economic giants of the European private sector are expected to attend this month's Middle East and North Africa (MENA) economic summit in Amman.

At a first glance, it could seem a small number, but quality definitely makes up for quantity, according to a provisional list released by the Jordanian committee preparing for the summit. Participation of the European private sector is going to be marked by the presence of big companies, covering all sectors and represented by their high-

est cadres.

From Marks & Spencer to Volkswagen, Club Med and Henkel, most of the names that accompany the average European every day life are going to be at the MENA summit.

The president of Olivetti, Carlo de Benedetti, is registered as one of the conference's speakers, while Sir Brian Hill will represent Higgs and Hill. Also present will be directors and board members from Credit Lyonnais, British Aerospace, Siemens, Alcatel, Baring Securities, Barclays, and Strling are going to attend the summit.

"Particularly remarkable is the presence of oil companies, (Total and Elf), and major banks," said Christian Ponsot, commercial

secretary of the French embassy.

According to Maria Pia Bianconi, commercial attaché of the Italian embassy, ENI, the Italian colossus for hydrocarbons and one of the sponsors and speakers of the Amman economic summit, has already invested \$3 million in a feasibility study for the Red Sea-Dead Sea Canal Project. Mrs. Bianconi said the project aims at bringing the Red Sea water to the Dead Sea, restoring the natural level of the Dead Sea, generating energy and serving desalination purposes.

"European companies have a solid tradition in this area and their participation will be very consistent and effective," said Umayya Toukan, rapporteur of the

Jordanian preparatory committee.

According to a bulletin published by the Central Bank of Jordan, in the first four months of this year, 34.6 per cent of Jordan's imports and nine per cent of the Kingdom exports were from and to European Union countries.

Dr. Toukan, director-general of the Amman Financial Market (AFM), said that the three-day Amman conference starting on Oct. 29 is meant to focus especially on business and its purpose is to give potential investors a chance to sound out the economic potential of this region.

"To achieve concrete results, the conference has to be 'manageable' to a certain extent, we also tried to contain the number of par-

ticipants," Dr. Toukan added. Over 400 government delegates and over 600 executives from leading international companies are expected to take part in the summit.

"From the companies' side we can see a serious interest, though at the actual stage we still don't know much about their concrete projects," said Samar Ashkar, commercial officer at the British embassy.

"Board members and even presidents are coming here to make contacts and to have an idea of the situation in this area. 'If they'll be satisfied, they'll send their senior managers' here again to conclude business."

The British government delegation will be headed

by Anthony Nelson, minister of trade.

"Some of the companies taking part in the conference are new to this area, others are already working here, like Rolls Royce, which is now building a power plant in Aqaba worth \$41 million, said Ms. Ashkar. "But, most importantly, they are all coming to Amman knowing what to expect and prepared, because over past months they've been briefed and updated with all the useful information."

During the conference, the Jordanian private sector, represented by the Jordanian Businessmen Association (JBA), will present its foreign counterparts proposals of over 100 projects. The list of the

projects is expected to be ready by Oct. 15, according to Ms. Ashkar.

According to Dr. Toukan, besides the official plenary sessions, there will be over 50 sessions, each one with five speakers and one moderator, chosen to meet as much as possible the requirements of balance among different sectors and geographic areas. Plenary sessions will be about: finance and investment, infrastructure, economic climate, trade and industry. The main categories to be discussed in the workshops are: financial services, food and agro-industry, textiles and apparels, transportation, energy, engineering and constructions. Information

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Turkish troops enter Iraq to hit PKK

DIYARBAKIR, Turkey (Agencies) — Turkish troops have crossed into northern Iraq to strike at separatist Kurdish guerrillas fighting the Ankara government, a Turkish official has said.

"We went in and hit them," Unal Erkan, governor for Turkey's 10 southern provinces under emergency rule, told Reuters on Saturday.

Mr. Erkan said Turkish soldiers crossed into northern Iraq Friday and advanced three to four kilometres. It was unclear how many were sent in. "When the work is finished they will return," he said.

Iraq Sunday protested to

Turkey over the incursion into its territory by Turkish forces, the official Iraqi News Agency said.

The agency quoted a Foreign Ministry spokesman as saying Turkey's charge d'affaires in Baghdad was summoned to the ministry to be informed of the government's "strong protest."

It said Turkish forces crossed into Iraqi territory Friday in pursuit of Turkish Kurdish rebels, causing many casualties. It did not elaborate.

"The Iraqi government categorically rejects the pretexts repeated by the Turkish government to justify its military operations inside Iraq and considers these op-

erations a blatant violation of its sovereignty," the spokesman said.

Turkey often sends troops into northern Iraq in pursuit of guerrillas of the outlawed Kurdish Labour Party (PKK), who have been fighting for a Kurdish homeland in south-east Turkey for more than a decade.

A de facto, autonomous state for Iraqi Kurds was set up in the Kurdish north of Iraq under U.S. protection after the end of the 1991 Gulf war. PKK guerrillas use bases in northern Iraq to launch attacks against Turkish forces across the border.

"The Iraqi government de-

mands that the Turkish government fully and immediately withdraws its forces and stop repeating these violations," the Iraqi spokesman said Sunday.

Turkey twice this year poured troops into northern Iraq to pound PKK rebels.

A major cross-border operation in March was criticised by some of Turkey's Western allies, but small groups of soldiers are reported at times to engage in forays across the border.

The regional governor's office in Diyarbakir Sunday issued a statement saying that 32 PKK guerrillas were killed in the past 24 hours.

Hunt on in Morocco for policeman who killed 2 tourists, injured others

TANGIER, Morocco (R) — Police combed forests and manned roadblocks in the northern Moroccan city of Tangier on Sunday in the hunt for an off-duty policeman who gunned down two British tourists in a shooting spree at a seaside hotel.

Three other tourists, including 12-year-old British schoolgirl Charlean Barker Hall, were wounded in the attack on Friday night at the Tarik hotel.

Police said Martin Gower, an electrician from Ruislip near London, and his wife Margaret, both in their 60s, were killed instantly when Mustapha Hamouche went on the rampage in the hotel's bar just after killing his wife in a fit of passion. He escaped by running into a forest near the hotel.

"He was shouting Allahu Akbar all the time. He was hysterical," said Barbara Kiham, of Liverpool, England.

Ms. Kiham was in the bar when the man, an off-duty police inspector described as wearing a long white robe, walked in and started to shoot randomly. Frenchman Herve Mangin was also wounded in the bar.

Witnesses said Patricia Cherrat, a British woman in her 50s, was shot when the gunman chased her up the stairs.

Doctor Wafa Benhalima, who treated Ms. Cherrat, said her condition was stable after two bullets were removed from her back. She said a hospital plane was due to arrive in Tangier later on Sunday to fly Ms. Cherrat home.

"There were fragments in her back and she has difficulty breathing but she is stable. She is conscious and speaking," Dr. Benhalima told Reuters.

Steven Stewart, a spokesman for tour operator First Choice, said the holidaymakers were given a choice of curtailing their two-week holiday or flying home as scheduled on Wednesday.

He would not say when the bodies of the two victims would be flown home, saying the family had requested privacy.

The guests have been moved from the Tarik to other hotels in Tangier and a few, including the Hall family, have said they would stay until Wednesday. Reporters said there were no signs of extra security at the hotels although the attacker was still on the run.

Ms. Charlean, from Norfolk in eastern England, said she was in her room at the Tarik hotel when she and her parents heard a woman outside shouting: "Help me save me."

"I said to the man: 'excuse me, can you help me?' He looked carefully at me and he shot. He wore a white robe. He had no beard and no glasses," the blonde schoolgirl said.

Ms. Hall, whose hand was in bandages, said she put her hands over her head as the gunman aimed his pistol at her.

"I think he was crazy. I think he had too much hashish," Charlean's mother, Janet, said. "My daughter is alive. That's the most important thing."

A German tourist, who was in the bar at the time of the shooting, described the scene at the hotel, where 150 British and German guests were staying at the time.

"There were about 50 people in the bar when a man wearing a long white robe walked in and started shooting with a small pistol," the German, who did not wish to be named, said.

The British embassy in Rabat said on Saturday it had no reason to believe the attack was politically motivated and they accepted that it was an isolated incident.

"It seems an off-duty policeman in a fit of rage killed his wife and injured his brother-in-law before opening fire on residents in the hotel," it said.

Rafsanjani to help Ramos fight extremists

MANILA (AFP) — Iranian President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani has assured his Philippine counterpart Fidel Ramos that Iran will help Manila in the field of counter-terrorism, a presidential palace statement said Sunday.

Mr. Ramos said he expected Tehran to continue supporting peace talks between the Philippine government and the country's main Muslim insurgent group, the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF).

Mr. Rafsanjani met with Mr. Ramos for talks soon after arriving here on Sunday.

He assured Mr. Ramos "he and the Iranian government would assist the Philippines and the international community in the area of counter-terrorism," the palace said

without elaborating.

The palace also said Mr. Ramos briefed Mr. Rafsanjani on the status of talks with the MNLF, which waged a bloody separatist war in the southern Philippines in the 1970s, but which has since agreed to negotiate for autonomy for Muslim-populated regions.

The palace made no mention on whether the talks included recent reports that Ramzi Ahmad Yousef, the alleged mastermind of the World Trade Centre bombing, had threatened to attack Mr. Ramos and other targets here.

Yousef, who was detained in Pakistan in February, had earlier been here and allegedly planned attacks against visiting Pope John Paul II as well as foreign embassies and airlines.

He also allegedly carried out the mid-air bombing of a Philippine Airlines flight last year that claimed one life.

Palace aides said Sunday that security for Mr. Ramos should be boosted in the light of the threats by Yousef.

Iran has not been directly implicated in the attacks in the Philippines although security officials have said that other foreign Muslim fundamentalists are involved and are supporting MNLF breakaway groups which are not part of the peace talks.

Mr. Ramos said before the meeting Mr. Rafsanjani that their talks would focus on the need to "improve our trade and economic relations at all possible levels."

The two leaders witnessed the signing of various memoranda of understanding including one on the reciprocal

